



Master Plan Amendment #2017-0003 ***North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update***

Issue:	Planning Commission Hearing:	June 6, 2017
Consideration of a request to amend the North Potomac Yard Chapter of the City's Master Plan	City Council Hearing:	June 13, 2017
Staff: <i>Planning and Zoning</i> : Karl Moritz, Director; Jeffrey Farnier, Deputy Director; Carrie Beach, Division Chief, Richard Lawrence, Urban Planner; Jose Ayala, Urban Planner; Ashley Labadie, Urban Planner; Katherine Carraway, Urban Planner; Mary Catherine Collins, Urban Planner; <i>Housing</i> : Helen McIlvaine, Director; Tamara Jovovic, Housing Analyst; <i>Project Implementation</i> : Jason Kacamburas, Potomac Yard Metro Coordinator; <i>Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities</i> : Beth Znidersic, Principal Planner; <i>Transportation and Environmental Services</i> : Yon Lambert, Director; Carrie Sanders, Deputy Director; William Skrabak, Deputy Director; Steve Sindiong, Principal Planner; Lalit Sharma, Division Chief; Khoa Dinh Tran, Environmental Program Manager; Erin Bevis-Carver, Civil Engineer.		

CITY COUNCIL ACTION, SEPTEMBER 16, 2017: City Council adopted an ordinance to amend and re-ordain the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, by adopting and incorporating therein the amendment heretofore approved by City Council to replace the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Chapter of such Master Plan with an updated small area plan as Master Plan Amendment No. 2017-0003 and no other amendments, and to repeal all provisions of the said Master Plan as may be inconsistent with such amendment. (ORD. NO. 5081)

CITY COUNCIL ACTION, SEPTEMBER 12, 2017: City Council accepted the Planning Commission resolution recommending approval of Master Plan Amendment #2017-0003.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, SEPTEMBER 5, 2017: By unanimous consent, the Planning Commission voted to adopt a resolution to recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2017-0003.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION, JUNE 13, 2017: City Council approved the Planning Commission recommendation.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, JUNE 6, 2017: On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Master Plan Amendment #2017-0003. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2017-0003 with the following amendments:

- 1) Modify Recommendation 2.1 in Chapter 2 to include “and strive to achieve carbon neutrality for buildings by 2030” as follows:

2.1. North Potomac Yard should strive to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040, and strive to achieve carbon neutral buildings by 2030.

- 2) Replace Recommendation 2.5 in Chapter 2 “Encourage the use of alternative energy sources, including but not limited to, solar and wind power throughout the Plan area” with proposed staff recommendation #2 found on page 3 of staff memo dated June 2, 2017, as follows:

2.5 Encourage onsite generation and storage of renewable electricity from solar photovoltaic (PV) and other available renewable resources.

- 3) Add proposed staff recommendation #1 found on page 3 of the staff memo dated June 2, 2017, as follows:

Explore the development of district energy systems for heating and cooling that take advantage of local renewable energy sources, including but not limited to geothermal energy, sewage heat, anaerobic digestion, and waste heat from buildings.

The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Discussion:

The Commission agreed with the staff analysis and recommendation, and was supportive of the Master Plan Amendment. The Commission asserted that the items reflect the culmination of a positive community process representing a strong execution of the vision of the Plan.

Commissioner Koenig, as chair of the North Potomac Yard Advisory Group, provided a summary of the planning process highlighted by the following: an involved and effective community engagement process; the Advisory Group and community’s input; and the developer team and staff management of the process. The Commissioner recommended approval of the Draft Plan to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Wasowski expressed support for the Plan and the refinements that lend to the success of the redevelopment of the Plan area. The Commissioner emphasized the importance of North Potomac Yard as a major economic engine and the benefits it will provide for the City. The process of refining the Plan has provided more detail and creates a path forward for redevelopment.

Commissioner Macek expressed support for the work of the Advisory Group and the refinements to the Plan as proposed. Commissioner Macek discussed the transportation refinements, particularly to Potomac Avenue, were an improvement that would promote a more livable environment. The update provides a good blueprint for moving forward. The Commissioner was also supportive of the direction provided for the open space network that provides meaningful, functional, and useful public open spaces throughout the Plan area, while preserving contiguous open spaces along the perimeter.

Commissioner Brown stated that the Plan provides thoughtful and skilled direction and

supported the Plan.

Commissioner McMahon praised the thoughtful discussion of trade-offs by the AG, staff, and developers to create a feasible project that balances the various issues debated through the course of the process. The Commissioner expressed that the Plan pays particular attention to the safe flow of people as priority as well as the flow and accessibility of open space throughout the area. Commissioner McMahon stated that the Plan strikes an appropriate balance between detailed guidance and enough flexibility to accommodate future decisions. Commissioner McMahon reinforced elements of the Plan such as the Existing Neighborhoods Chapter and the historical narrative which lend to the context and importance of the site.

Commissioner Lyle expressed that the Plan is creative and forward thinking and provides flexibility to accommodate changes in technology and transit. Commissioner Lyle commended staff on the quality of the Plan and expressed support.

Commissioner Lyman stated that the Plan is forward thinking, especially in regards to sustainability. The Commissioner emphasized the successful management of a collaborative process and community engagement that produced the Plan.

The Commissioners discussed the June 2, 2017 staff memo in response to the Environmental Policy Commission's letter and recommended amending the plan as specified, as they are consistent with existing City policy and are appropriate for inclusion in the Small Area Plan.

Speakers:

Jeremy Fretts of Marris Avenue and member of the North Potomac Yard Advisory Group and member of the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee spoke in support of the master plan amendment and the 2040 environmental target as proposed in the recommendations. Mr. Fretts discussed the level of discourse that occurred over the community engagement process to vet the various elements of the Plan. Mr. Fretts highlighted two issues that were discussed at great length that the Plan recommendations have addressed; 1.) the character of Potomac Avenue, and 2.) the appropriate measures to inform the environmental sustainability recommendations of the Plan. Relative to environmental sustainability, Mr. Fretts supported the Plan recommendations as proposed, as well as the proposed additional recommendations, providing a balance between specific targets as well as existing City policy to guide requirements.

Cathy Puskar, attorney, representing the developer and property owner of North Potomac Yard, emphasized the importance of the site as an economic engine for the City, including the development of the new Metrorail station and the importance of the redevelopment of the adjacent area. She described how the first phase proposal balances the many City policies and creates a viable project that realizes the vision of the Plan. In regard to the staff memo dated June 2, 2017, Ms. Puskar was supportive of recommendation 2c. to replace recommendation 2.5. Relative to the two additional recommendations proposed, Ms. Puskar indicated that, if added by Planning Commission, the applicant would comply with the aspirational recommendations and strive to achieve them. Ms. Puskar emphasized the developer's commitment to sustainability as a core principle.

I. OVERVIEW

The [North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan](#), approved by City Council in 2010, established a long-term vision for the 70-acre site as a mixed use, transit oriented, sustainable community anchored by a new Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. It was recognized then, that with the Metrorail Station and the Plan's recommended density and land use mix, North Potomac Yard was poised to become a long-term economic engine for the City.

The 2017 update to the Plan brings the City one step closer to this reality. Now, with the Metrorail Station approved by City Council and WMATA preparing to select a contractor responsible for constructing the Metrorail Station, the 2017 Plan update adjusts the Plan framework to resolve phasing challenges posed by leases on the existing retail shopping center for redevelopment. While affirming the long-term vision, principles and goals of the 2010 Plan, the 2017 update enables redevelopment of the existing 25-acre theater site as Phase 1, which is anticipated to coincide with the Metrorail Station opening in the first phase, maintains a mix of office, hotel, and retail, a school reservation site, increases total open space, and creates a double-sided retail shopping street with an emphasis on a quality public realm (see Figure 1). The long-term opportunity for build out of the remaining 45 acres is maintained at 7.5 million square feet of mixed use. Further, with more stringent design standards in place, the area will promote a new standard in urban design and building design that will elevate the design of buildings, the public realm and open space in Potomac Yard.

Starting in April 2016, the North Potomac Yard Advisory Group established by City Council embarked on a planning process to evaluate potential Plan amendments. Over the course of the 13-month process, options for potential amendments to the 2010 Plan were debated, refined, and finalized. The proposed 2017 update to the Plan addresses and resolves key questions and at times competing interests raised during the process: street configuration, bike-pedestrian environment/public realm, open space, land use mix, neighborhood impacts, building heights, integrating the Metro Station into the design, affordable housing, and environmental sustainability.

II. DISCUSSION

The proposed plan update maintains the principles of the 2010 Plan to create an economically and environmentally sustainable community for living, working, shopping, recreation, culture, and civic uses for a wide range of incomes and ages. This urban community will be highly walkable, bike-able, and connected by transit, feature excellence in design and transitions appropriate to the character of surrounding neighborhoods, and provide landscaped streets and a network of usable open spaces.

Topics with a significant amount of discussion during the community planning process are described in further detail below with page numbers from the Plan and illustrative figures provided for additional information.

Street Framework (NPY Plan pages 16-25)

One of the fundamental changes to the Plan is to the street framework. The 2010 Plan recommended that Potomac Avenue be realigned from its current location to run adjacent to Potomac Yard Park as it does in South Potomac Yard. With this update to accommodate the fact that Target and the retail shopping center will remain, the proposed update retains Potomac Avenue in its current alignment, allowing development to occur east of the Avenue on the theater site (see Figure 2). The Advisory Group and community had extensive conversations about the concern that Potomac Avenue could act as a barrier to the Metrorail Station and Potomac Yard Park for pedestrians from the area west of Potomac Avenue. To minimize this potential impact and maximize pedestrian safety, the Plan includes new criteria for the pedestrian oriented design of Potomac Avenue in Phase 1: narrowing the width of the street and adding on-street parking. In future phases, the Plan recommends future analysis to determine appropriate design and provide flexibility to determine final location of the Metroway in future phases. (see Figure 3)

Another positive addition that the updated framework enables is a new “shared street” adjacent to Potomac Yard Park. Prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists, the “shared street” will have low vehicle speed and volume, on street parking, and paving materials and streetscaping that enhance walkability and safety (see Figure 4). In addition, the update creates a new double-sided retail street with an enhanced public realm connecting to the Metrorail Station, neighborhoods, community open spaces, and activities throughout the development (see Figure 5). Finally, the updated street framework allows the Metrorail Station entrance/exit to directly open out into the development (rather than crossing Potomac Avenue), creating a memorable civic plaza (see Figure 6). Each of these improvements to the public realm will be constructed as part of the first phase of development.

Open Space (NPY Plan pages 44-56)

The Plan creates an open space and trail network within Potomac Yard that completes a missing link in the City’s broader network, particularly with the completion of Potomac Yard Park. The proposed adjustment to the street framework described above enables net new public open space of more than one acre in Potomac Yard Park (for a total of approximately 4.5 acres), 0.2-acre for the new Market Lawn, and 0.3-acre for the new Metro Plaza, for a net-new total of approximately 1.5 acres. In all, five acres of new open space (or 20%) will be delivered as part of the first phase of development (see Figure 7). Many comments about the appropriate location, design and configuration of a future “Market Green” park on East Reed Avenue led to new language and graphics allowing flexibility for that park while establishing new parameters for minimum size and general location (see Figure 8). In addition, significant discussion about open space resulted in a careful review of the spaces being proposed, how they relate to one another, successful precedent open spaces, and the importance of connectivity to create a comprehensive and accessible open space network.

The Plan also allows for a necessary sanitary sewer pump station to be located within open space, specifically in the northern portion of Potomac Yard Park. The Plan specifies that the pump station be designed in such a way as to be integrated into and compatible with the open space uses, and located as close to the rail right of way as feasible. There was agreement among

the Advisory Group members that this necessary infrastructure should be designed in such a way as to be an amenity in the park, perhaps serving an educational purpose.

Metrorail Station Funding (NPY Plan pages 118-120)

While Metrorail Station funding was not within the scope of this planning effort, the question was raised. The Plan does not amend developer funding obligations nor the Special Tax District, both of which will be addressed by City Council after final cost information for the Metrorail Station is available. After the Metrorail Station was approved, a Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Fund was established, the proceeds of which are to be used solely for the design, construction, and financing of the station and will be segregated from other revenues. The Fund will accumulate revenue from the following sources: Net New Tax Revenue; Special Tax Districts; Developer Contributions; and Federal-State Grant funding.

Sustainability (NPY Plan pages 8-13)

The North Potomac Yard Plan demonstrates environmental leadership through multiple strategies to ensure that the redevelopment of the Plan area enhances the natural environment, quality of life, and improves environmental performance with new development. The Plan recommends the submission of an Environmental Sustainability Master Plan (ESMP) as part of the submission of the first development special use permit (DSUP) to identify strategies to implement the phased recommendations on a plan-area wide basis. Additionally, the Plan requires area-wide achievement of LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) and a comprehensive/site-wide Water Management Plan that is comprised of a Stormwater Management Plan incorporating innovative stormwater practices and a Sanitary Sewer Master Plan. The Plan also recommends performance standards and compliance with targets aligned with the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) as implemented through City policies.

The Advisory Group extensively discussed the Plan's sustainability recommendations and ultimately came to agreement on the recommendations summarized above. A significant amount of the discussion centered on the green building and carbon neutrality recommendations and whether the Plan should exceed those already in place citywide. Staff recommends that new policy be considered and implemented on a citywide basis, rather than having different policy requirements within individual Small Area Plans. When the EAP and associated Green Building Policy are updated in Fiscal Year 2019, all new development will be expected to comply at a consistent level.

Land Uses (NPY Plan page 32-66)

From a land use perspective, the objective of the update was to ensure that the land use mix and the amount of development would maintain the anticipated positive impact on both economic sustainability and community placemaking in the short and long term. The proposal for the development of blocks as part of Phase 1 does include a significant amount of residential and more retail uses than previously envisioned. Anchored by a hotel and an office building adjacent to the Metrorail Station, Phase 1 will feature a double loaded shopping and dining retail street with residential uses above. It was acknowledged that this approach is not only responsive to

current market demand, but also helps to create amenities, retail and a critical mass of residents and visitors to catalyze development and attract office uses in future phases. It is important to note that while there is a higher proportion of residential uses in Phase 1, the land use mix and total build-out for the entire site is maintained at 7.5M square feet as envisioned in the 2010 Plan (see Figure 9). In addition, new provisions were added to build in flexibility to locate office uses on any block within a ¼ mile watershed of the Metrorail Station. Further, new language allows flexibility for vertical mixed use office-residential buildings, responding to current trends in the market.

Building Heights (NPY Plan page 40) and Urban Design (NPY Plan page 25)

Building heights in the Plan were updated to reflect the updated flight path requirements with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and to comply with National Park Service and Historic District height limits. Beyond that, the Plan update generally maintains the maximum heights established in the 2010 Plan, although lower heights are allowed on some of the blocks in Phase 1. While it was a goal of the 2010 Plan to maximize heights at the Metrorail Station, there are several reasons why somewhat lower height on some of the blocks in Phase 1 are recommended. First, the priority was on creating a successful Phase 1 that would serve as a catalyst for Phase 2. Without a near term “place” created by the shopping street and residential uses, it will be very difficult to attract the higher density commercial development envisioned for future phases. In an increasingly competitive regional office market, having the amenities in place has become even more critical. One of the benefits of the slightly lower scale buildings in Phase 1 is that it tends to be more conducive to creating a successful shopping street – one that feels more human scaled. While some of the building heights are lower, the amount of development is generally consistent with the amount of development in the 2010 Plan.

Across the site, the Plan maintains flexibility and variety of building height across blocks/buildings to create a dynamic and interesting urban experience, architectural features, and a human scale public realm. It also maintains height transitions to lower scale existing residential neighborhoods west of Route 1. The developer has agreed to utilize different architects for different blocks within the site in order to achieve the goals established in the Plan, contributing significantly to the richer visual interest and character of North Potomac Yard. In addition, all buildings will be required to comply with the *North Potomac Yard Design Standards and Guidelines (Design Guidelines)* as part of the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) review.

Affordable Housing (NPY Plan page 57)

With regard to affordable housing, there was widespread support for amending the Plan to allow the use of the 30% bonus density provision in the zoning ordinance to gain more potential affordable housing units within walking distance of the Metrorail Station. In addition, the Plan encourages collocation of affordable housing with other uses, public private partnerships, and the use of microunits, which by virtue of their smaller size can offer some affordability. As in 2010, it envisions a range of potential housing affordability, from replacement public housing to workforce housing.

Transportation - Neighborhood Impacts (NPY Plan pages 111-112)

The Plan recommends a number of bicycle and pedestrian improvements that enhance the options for non-vehicle travel and language addressing the City's Vision Zero goals. First, in Phase 1, the multi-use path within the extended Potomac Yard Park will be constructed to complete trail connectivity from Braddock Road Metro to Potomac Yard Metro to Crystal City; addition to the existing trail on the west side of Potomac Avenue; and three on-street east-west bike connections.

An updated transportation analysis was conducted to understand potential traffic impacts as a result of changes in the framework streets, improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian network, access to the Metrorail Station, as well as recent and planned development and transit/infrastructure improvements within Potomac Yard South and Oakville Triangle. The results of the analysis, posted to the project web page and shared with the Advisory Group, indicated a minor increase in traffic volume through the corridor. Some mitigation measures related to signal optimization and intersection improvements are recommended in the Plan to coordinate with improvements recommended as part of the Oakville Triangle Plan. In addition, the Plan recommends that the developer be required to provide a monetary contribution for a comprehensive traffic calming strategy for the neighborhoods west of the Plan area appropriately phased with development to mitigate potential increases in traffic. The Plan also builds in flexibility to accommodate future technological advances, including electric and automated vehicles.

Schools (NPY Plan page 70)

Student forecast estimates for the Plan area were updated based on 2017 student generation rates. According to the estimates, between 60 and 90 elementary, 20 and 30 middle, and 25 and 40 high school students will be generated by the projected residential uses for North Potomac Yard. The southern portion of Potomac Yard (including Landbays G, H, I, J, and L and Potomac Greens) has generated a total of 84 students enrolled in ACPS during the 2016-2017 academic year. Of those students, 3 were enrolled in pre-k, 37 elementary, 22 middle, and 22 in high school.

If elementary school student generation rates continue to increase, the City will need additional capacity to support elementary school students. If determined to be needed within Potomac Yard, block 4 has been reserved for a possible urban multi-level school site (see Figure 10). If Block 4 is not used for a school, the City reserves the right to use the site for other purposes such as open space and/or a community facility/public building with potential colocation uses, such as affordable housing, above.

III. COMMUNITY

The Plan update was led by a 12-member Ad Hoc North Potomac Yard Advisory Group to review potential amendments to the 2010 Plan and serve as the community forum for the planning process. Guided by the City's civic engagement policy established during the What's Next Alexandria initiative, the Advisory Group convened in April 2016. Over the course of the

13-month process, there were 13 Advisory Group meetings, three open houses, three workshops, and three work sessions with Planning Commission and City Council. Detailed information on the community's involvement and the work of the Advisory Group can be found in Appendix A.2 of the Plan.

Draft chapters of the updated Plan were posted to the project webpage in February, and community members were invited to review and provide feedback on the draft document at the February, March and April Advisory Group Meetings, the April Open House, and through the North Potomac Yard SAP Comment Board. A compiled list of comments received on the draft is provided as Attachment 3 and 4.

The Advisory Group unanimously supported the Plan, as described in their attached letter of endorsement. In addition, the Plan was supported by the Transportation Commission, the Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC), provided as attachments.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

After adoption of the Plan, the Coordinated Development District (CDD) Concept Plan will be updated to be consistent with the Plan updates. Following approval of the Plan amendment, it is anticipated that Special Use Permit (DSUP) applications will be submitted for Phase 1. It is anticipated that Phase I of redevelopment will be constructed within the next three years, with future phases in approximately +/- 10 years. A key element of the Plan's successful implementation will be construction of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station, for which it is anticipated that the design-build contract will be awarded in 2017 and construction will begin in 2019, roughly the same anticipated start time for construction to begin on Phase 1.

The Planning Commission will oversee, advise on, and provide a public forum for implementation of the Plan as carried out by City staff from various departments. The Commission's knowledge of and experience with North Potomac Yard will ensure that projects meet the intent of the Plan. Implementation updates and refinements will be provided to the Planning Commission at regular intervals for review and guidance. The Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC) will continue to provide comment and guidance to applicants and staff on development proposals for the area to ensure compliance with the *North Potomac Yard Urban Design Standards*.

The Plan provides a framework and recommendations to guide implementation. In order to ensure that the intent of the Plan is met, some topics raised during the planning process by the Advisory Group and community merit additional highlight here as well as additional attention during implementation. This will occur through the process for updating the CDD zoning conditions and *North Potomac Yard Urban Design Standards*, and review of development applications.

- Open space design and programming: The Plan area should have quality, usable, open space that provides a variety of experiences and connects to the City's larger network of open spaces.

- Affordable housing: Locating affordable housing near transit is a high priority and the City and developer should seek out all feasible opportunities to increase the number of affordable units within the Plan area, including colocation with other uses, public private partnerships, and the use of bonus density.
- Potomac Avenue Phase 1 and 2: Ensure that Potomac Avenue adheres to the new criteria established in the Plan for both Phase 1 and 2 of development, promoting a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment. In addition, many members of the community have suggested that the City study options for improving Potomac Avenue in the southern portion of Potomac Yard to reduce vehicle speed and enhance pedestrian safety and comfort.
- Environmental sustainability and performance: New development should integrate meaningful environmental benefits into the built environment and public realm.
- Architecture and building materials: North Potomac Yard should exhibit excellence in design and materials. In accordance with the *North Potomac Yard Urban Design Standards*, new projects should provide a variety of height and massing and be well executed to be an asset to the community.
- Transportation improvements and traffic calming: Recommended transportation improvements and traffic calming in the adjoining neighborhoods should be completed to coordinate with development.

V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission, on its own motion, initiate an amendment to the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Chapter of the Master Plan and adopt Resolution MPA 2017-0003 recommending approval of an amendment to the Master Plan to replace the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Chapter approved in 2010 with the Updated Small Area Plan.

Attachments:

1. [North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan](http://www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyardplan) (2017) (www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyardplan)
2. North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update Summary
3. Advisory Group/Public Comments and Revisions on Preliminary Draft
4. Web Comments and Responses on Preliminary Draft
5. Letter from Ad Hoc North Potomac Yard Plan Advisory Group
6. Letter from Alexandria Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
7. Letter from Environmental Policy Commission
8. Letter from Parks and Recreation Commission
9. Letter from Transportation Commission

Figure 1

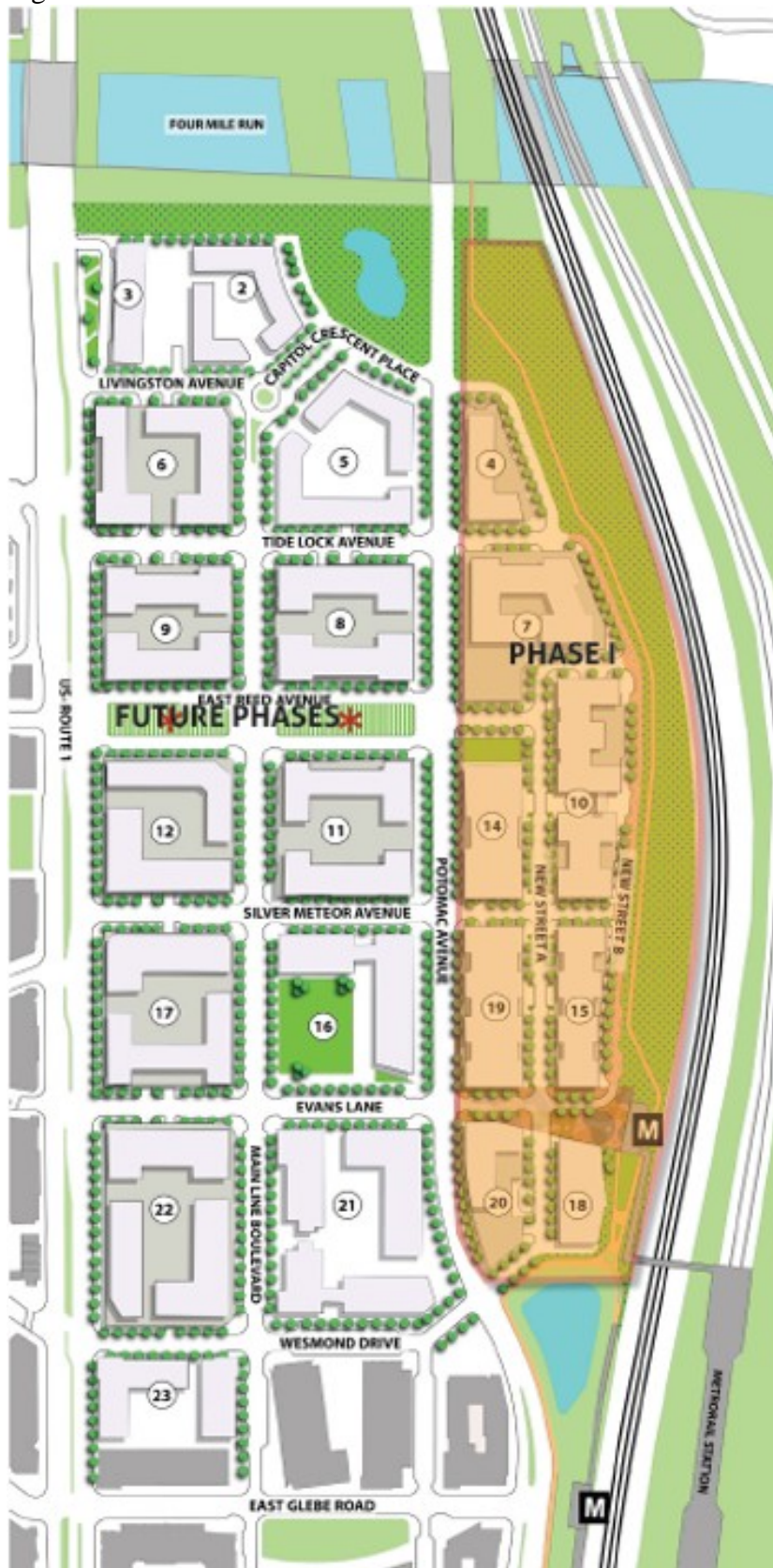


Figure 2 (2010 Plan Street Network)



Figure 2 (Plan Update Street Network)

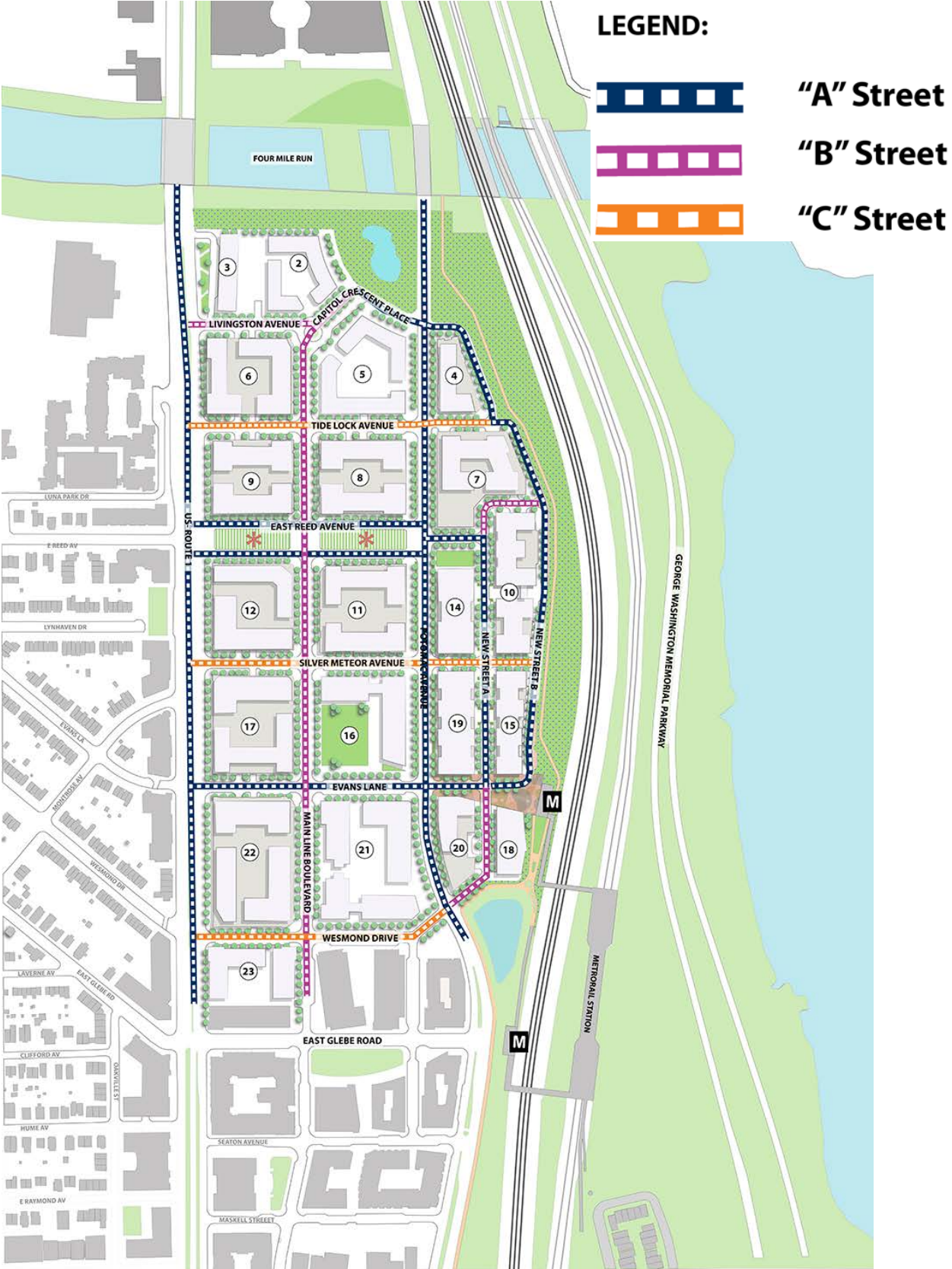


Figure 3

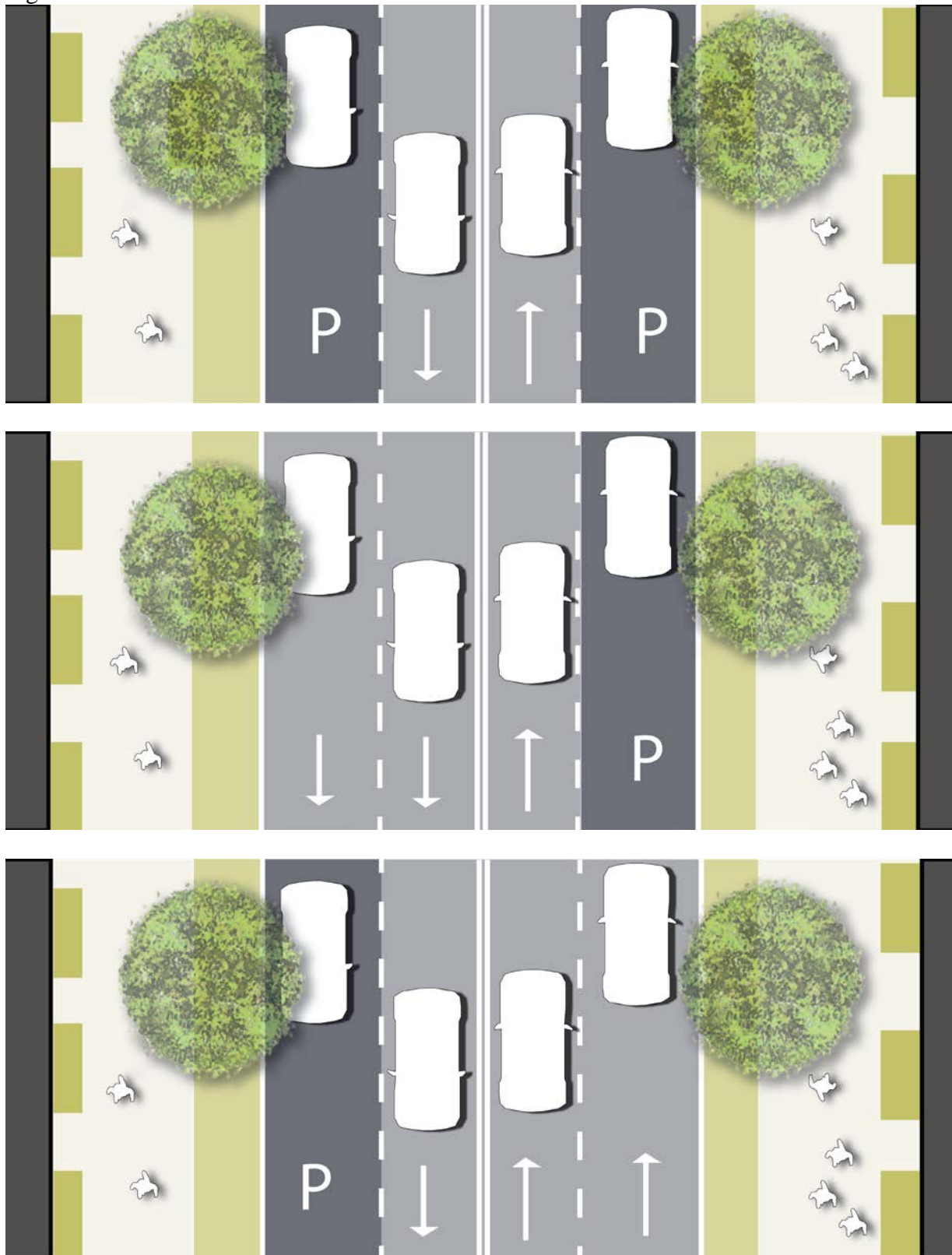


Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6 (daytime rendering)



Figure 6 (nighttime rendering)



Figure 7



Figure 8

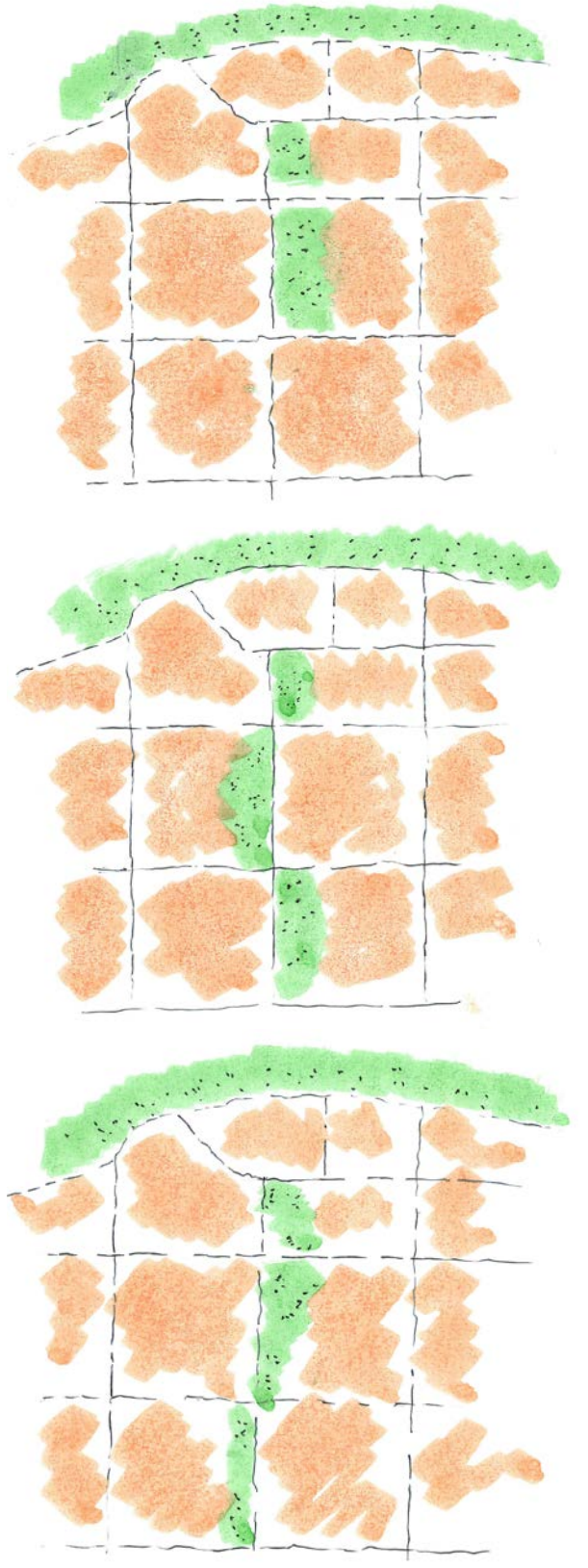


Figure 9

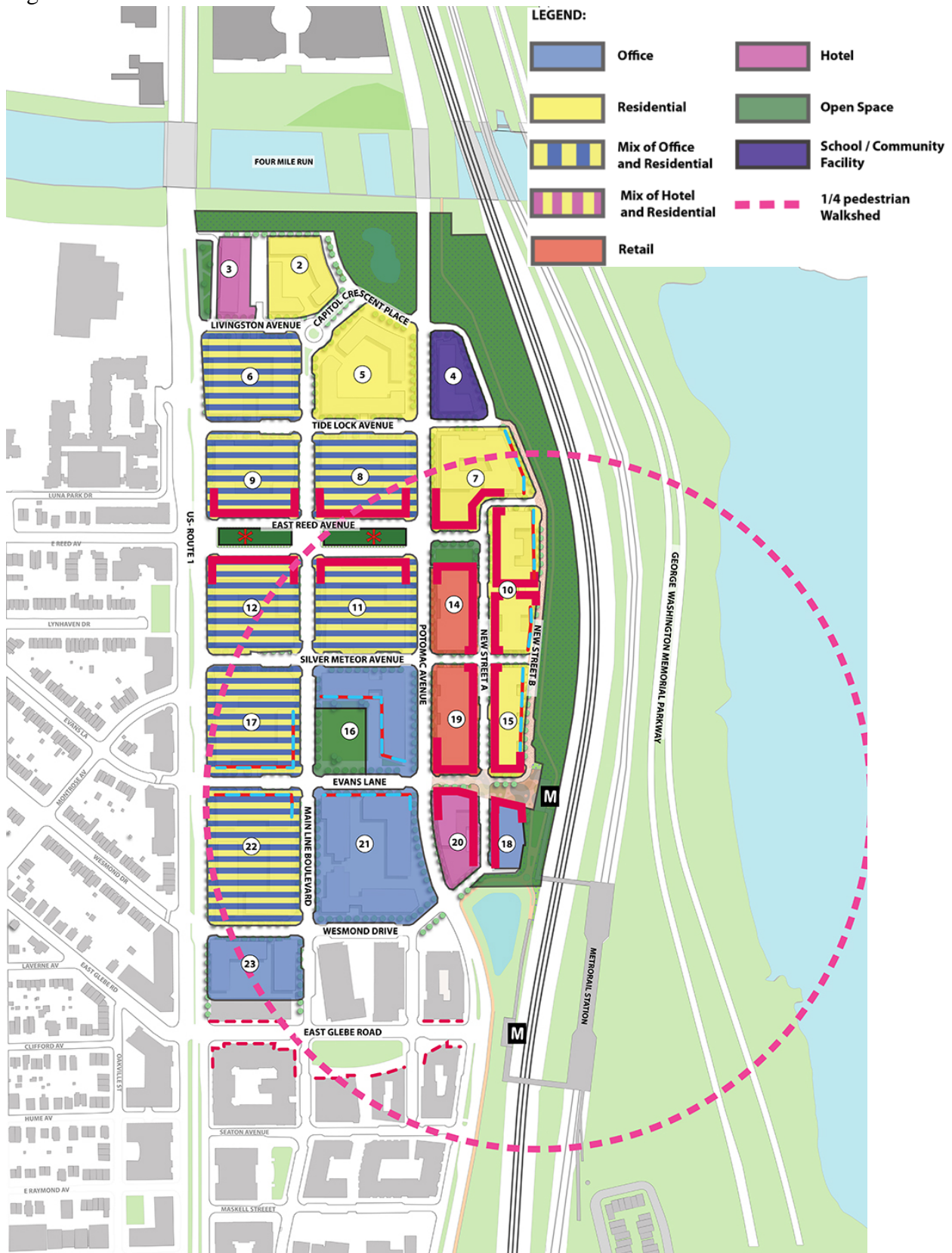
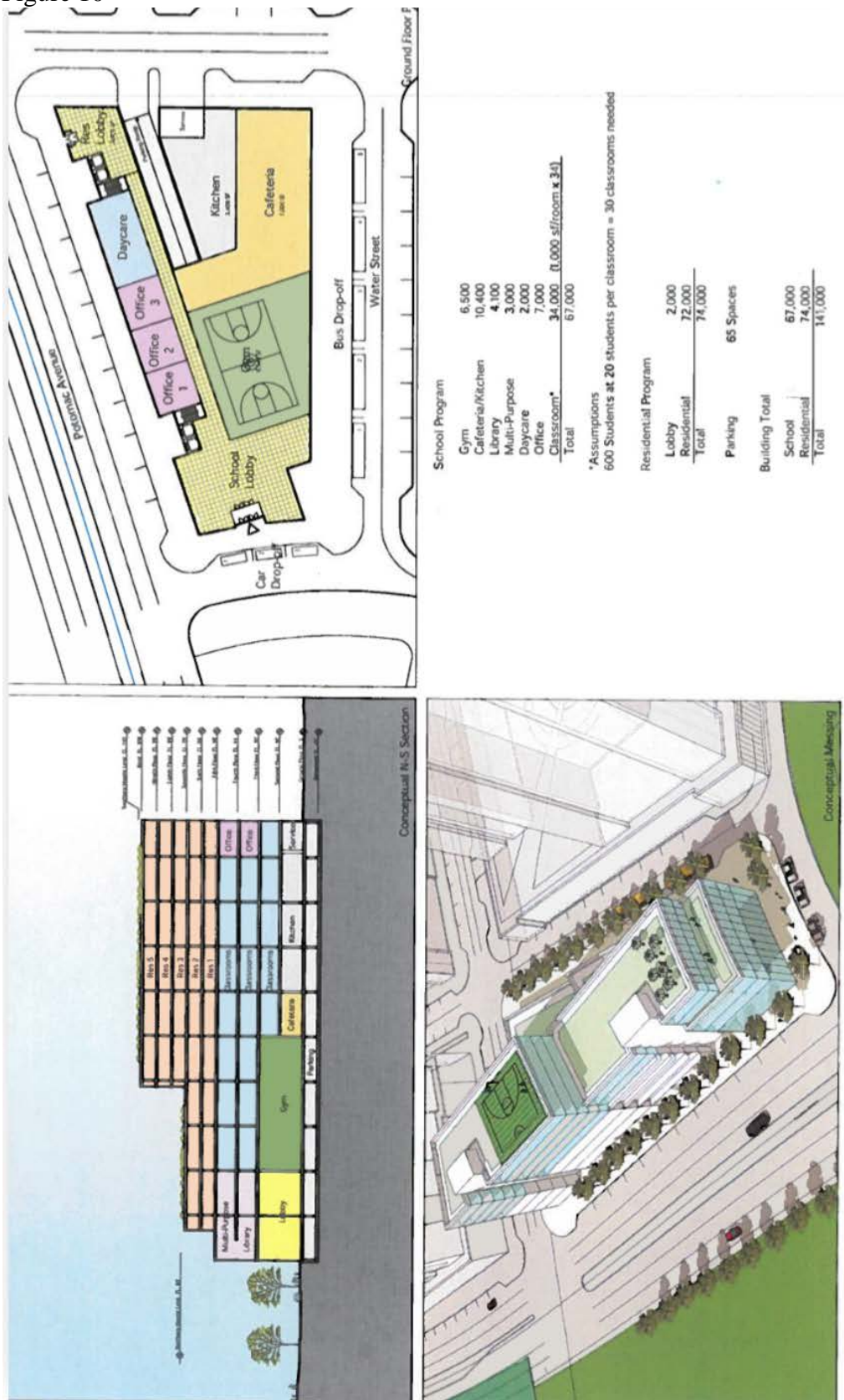


Figure 10





Attachment 2

North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update Summary

June 2017

Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1: Office, Residential, Hotel, and ground floor retail (1.3 M sq. ft.) Total development (7.5M sq. ft.) has not changed since 2010. Phase I has about 200,000 sq. ft. less than same area in 2010 Plan Emphasis on creating a vital retail street in Phase I to catalyze development in future phases Plan Area: Mix of residential and commercial office with concentrated areas for retail. Plan recommends flexibility for office anywhere within a ¼ mile of Metro station. Additionally, where viable ground floor retail may be allowed in alternative locations if consistent with intent of the Plan The area is zoned CDD#19
Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased Potomac Yard Park by an additional minimum 1 acre from 2010 Plan; approximately 4.5 acres. New Metro Plaza approx. 0.3 acres for the northern plaza. Creates a special place at the northern entrance. Total public realm (including flush streets and pedestrian zone approximately 0.7 acres New Market Lawn at the terminus of E. Reed Ave. Approximately 0.2 acres Mid-block pedestrian connection from retail street to Potomac Yard Park Recommends 15% ground level and an additional 25% of ground and rooftop amenity space in the Plan area
Heights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Heights range from approximately 60-90ft across Phase I Plan recommends flexibility and variety of building height across blocks/buildings. Some height limits on the southern portion of the plan area are restricted by FAA flight path Heights west of Potomac Ave (Phase II) Consistent with 2010 Plan Requirements for buffers and scale transitions to existing residential to west of Route 1
Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends utilization of Section 7-700 for bonus density up to 30%. Previously not allowed with 2010 Plan
Transportation & Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected street grid that creates urban/walkable, pedestrian-scale blocks Pedestrianization of Potomac Ave in Phase I, signalization at urban intervals and on- street parking Emphasis to maintain pedestrian character of Potomac Ave in Phase II and beyond; reduce crossing width for pedestrians/cyclists Maintain functionality of BRT to serve Plan area Allow flexibility to analyze location of dedicated BRT in Phase II Enhanced bike/pedestrian network and connectivity Phase I, multi-use path within extended Potomac Yard Park; existing Potomac Yard Trail on the west side of Potomac Ave remains Bike facilities on 3 east-west streets within Plan area



Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Community facilities plan required to identify locations of community facilities 0.7 acre site (Block 4) reserved for urban school site or other community facilities if not needed for school (2010 Plan) Plan recommends co-location of uses of Block 4, where feasible
Sustainability & Stormwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan requires a Sustainability Master Plan to provide plan area wide approach to achieving sustainability goals Prioritizes goals aligned with EAP Recommends performance standards and compliance with EAP as implemented through City policies Plan requires comprehensive/site-wide Stormwater Management Plan LEED ND required

Table 1: North Potomac Yard Plan Update - Proposed Development

2017 Update	Total Plan Area (+/-69 acres)	Phase I only (+/-25 acres)
Office	1,930,000 sf	141,400 gsf
Residential	1,100,000 gsf	774,875 gsf
Flexible Office or Residential	3,401,300 gsf	
Retail	930,000 gsf	298,650 gsf
Hotel	170,000 gsf (300 rooms)	87,100 gsf (150 rooms)
Total SF	~7.5M gsf	~1.3M gsf
Open Space	~ 9.34 acres	~ 5 acres
<hr/>		
2010 PLAN	Total Plan Area (+/-69 acres)	
Office	1,930,000 sf	
Residential	1,100,000 gsf	
Flexible Office or Residential	3,395,000 gsf	
Retail	930,000 gsf	
Hotel	170,000 gsf (300 rooms)	
Total SF	~7.525M gsf	
Open Space	~ 7.84 acres	(~3 acres – Phase I area)

Advisory Group & Public Comments on Preliminary Draft Plan (Based on Advisory Group and Community Comments)

5.23.2017

Chapter 1: Vision & Guiding Principles

- Add Figure 1.1: Illustrative Map and note.
- *Note: The final design and configuration of buildings and open spaces will be determined as part of the development review process subject to compliance with the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan, Design Standards and Guidelines, and applicable requirements and City policies.*

Chapter 2: Environmental Sustainability & Performance

- Add the following language to section E. Stormwater Management, Green Infrastructure, and Natural Vegetation. "Stormwater management, and if feasible, recaptured water, is required to be integrated as part of the street and open space design to improve the site's hydrology to reduce runoff, improve water quality, and provide residents and visitors opportunities to participate in the natural processes of their environment. Creative use of water within the public realm increases vitality and adds visual interest to public spaces."
- Update 2.14 – Replace "Require" with "Establish". Establish minimum quantities of green roofs and/or solar power generation on building roofs.
- Moved and recommendation 2.12 to Chapter 6 – Transportation. "Design parking garages to accommodate electric vehicle charging stations and other emerging technologies including autonomous vehicles."

Chapter 3: Urban Design/Framework

- Update Figure 3.1 Street Hierarchy.
- Add Figure 3.2 Shared Street Map
- Add new recommendation 3.7 Incorporate creative use of water elements and features within the public realm including streetscapes and public spaces.
- Update Figure labels for maps throughout the chapter
- Add Street Connectivity map – update map reference on page 3, line 1.
- Add block 7 diagrams – Establish the intent. The road connection should ensure visibility and provide a sight corridor to Potomac Yard Park. Explore the feasibility and impacts of final road design and shall be determined through the development review process.

Chapter 4: Land Use

- Update retail frontage map Figure 4.3 on Blocks 15, 18. Revised required retail on Blocks 14 and 19 where loading is located. Update required retail on Block 10 internal ped connection.
- Figure 4.5b – Provide language for Block 7, min and max
- Gateway & King Case Study change completion date to 2019
- Update Recommendation 4.34 Any above-grade parking is required to be lined with active uses for each level for all street and park and/or open space frontages (Figures 4.6a, 4.6b, 4.6c, 4.6d). If collector parking garages are provided for retail uses, the garages will be predominantly screened with active uses and/or architectural treatments and/or landscape elements.
- Update Figure 4.8: Block 21 mid-block connection-remove E-W connection, update PY Park portion with garage underneath.
- Add new recommendation under land use section. **New 4.3** "The Plan provides flexibility for commercial or residential uses on many blocks. In addition, mixed use buildings that

incorporate office and residential within the same building may be allowed as determined through the development review process.”

- And new recommendation **New 4.51** The Plan recommends the design, configuration, and final location of the Market Green will be determined as part of the development review process for the future phases.
- Add language to recommendation **4.53** If blocks adjacent to Route 1 request bonus height pursuant to Section 7-700, the maximum height of buildings shall not exceed the maximum height per Figure 4.5b.
- Added notes to development summary table (Table 4.3) and Building heights map (Figure 4.5b)
 6. The maximum building height for the Metrorail Station shall not exceed 50 feet in the general location as depicted within the Plan.
 7. The maximum height of the pump station or any park structures must comply with the intent of the Plan and require review as part of the development review process.
- Updated Open Space Exhibits
- Added Regional Open Space sub-section P.44.
- Added Market Green configuration options and design principles p.53
- Update Development Summary Table – Blocks 7 and 10- Principle Use from Office/Residential to Residential and Block 22 – Principle use from Office to Office/Residential.

Chapter 5: Community Facilities

- Update/Clarify recommendation 5.1 “co-located uses”
- Revise recommendation 5.2 Require the provision of daycare/childcare facilities, within North Potomac Yard, as part of the community facilities, mixed-use, and/or office buildings. Distribution and location of daycare/childcare facilities will be determined as part of the development review process and consistent with the Community Facilities Plan. Daycare/ childcare facilities shall be permitted through an administrative approval within existing buildings.
- Revised 5.5 and address more clearly in Chapter 9: Implementation. The community facilities proposal should include coordination with the City and address community facility needs of the City and future residents/users. The proposal should anticipate the location and approximate size of associated facilities.

Chapter 6: Transportation

- Recommendation Update 6.6, last bullet: “Incorporate special treatment. Explore materials/pavers or vertical elements to slow traffic for walkability and safety.”
- Revised language to remove references to 2010 Plan
- Added reference to Chapter 3 in recommendation 6.6.
- Add new recommendation: **Add 6.31** “Explore opportunities to enhance bike and pedestrian circulation around the existing stormwater pond in Potomac Yard Park using elements such as bridges, decks and landscaping.”
- Add a new recommendation: **Add 6.11** “Ensure that the functions of passenger loading, unloading, and vehicle layover in the vicinity of the Metro Station are designed so as to prioritize the pedestrian environment envisioned by the Plan.”
- Added sections J and K to address carshare and autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles/charging stations.
- Moved and recommendation 2.12 to Chapter 6 – Transportation. **New 6.35** “Design parking garages to accommodate electric vehicle charging stations and other emerging technologies including autonomous vehicles.”

- Add new recommendation: **Add 6.12** [“Consider incorporating Autonomous Vehicles \(AV\) as part of the future roadway and building design by incorporating elements that may facilitate automated vehicles and other emerging transportation trends without compromising pedestrian safety and the public realm.”](#)
- Added call out box on pg. 81 describing City policy on Vision Zero

Chapter 7: Infrastructure

- Section E. Revise first sentence to [“A pump station and any associated infrastructure upgrades will...”](#)
- New 7.14: [A pump station and any associated infrastructure upgrades shall be constructed to accommodate the planned development within North Potomac Yard.](#)
- Update 7.16 Any future power transmission lines [will](#) be undergrounded by DVP and located in a manner to minimize the [impact on and integrate with](#) planned [open space and infrastructure](#) improvements within North Potomac Yard and Four Mile Run. As part of the construction of any additional transmission lines, the existing terminal station within Four Mile Run (Figure 7.2), [will](#) be removed by DVP.

Chapter 8: Existing Neighborhoods

- Add updated SPY development numbers previously removed.
- Update 8.1 Require the developer to provide a monetary contribution for the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive traffic calming and parking management strategy for the neighborhoods to the west of North Potomac Yard. The study and implementation [of traffic calming improvements](#) will be proactive and phased with [the build out of North Potomac Yard](#) development.

Chapter 9: Implementation

- [Updated Metro Funding Section](#)
- [Added Phase I Development](#)
- [Added Plan Area Implementation](#)

Appendices

Updated Community Outreach Process

Updated Demographic Section

Updated Context Background

Updated Background Section

Base Map Updates:

- Remove Courtyard open space on Block 21.
- Update Midblock connection E-W connection
- Added Route 1 Gateway open space

North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Web Comments | March – May 2017

Date Received	Public Comment – Web Comment Board	Staff Response
5/1/2017	<p>“Joan”: It seems that the proposed elementary school has very little surrounding recreation area. My concern is that the school will be on a postage stamp land allotment like Samuel Tucker School at Cameron Station. Children need playing fields and playgrounds.</p>	<p>The plan update recommends increasing the total open space in Potomac Yard Park by one acre. The majority of this additional open space will be next to the reserved school site. The update also recommends increasing the width of the park adjacent to the reserved school site to accommodate park features such as playgrounds and field space. A future school in North Potomac Yard would follow the urban school model, and could include rooftop open space for outdoor classrooms, active uses such as sport courts, or classroom gardens.</p>
4/30/2017	<p>“Kevin”: I agree with the previous comments. The current design for Potomac Avenue does not align with the desire to be pedestrian and cyclist friendly. It is currently being used as a diversion from Route 1 during commuting hours. For example, there are mothers walking with their children that are forced to cross four lanes of traffic, which rarely stops for them. Without addressing how pedestrians and cyclists could more safely interact with automobile traffic on Potomac Avenue, you will have a fractured community divided by those four lanes. It's critical that this be clearly addressed in the plan for this to be successful.</p>	<p>The plan recommends that Potomac Avenue within the Plan area (north of E. Glebe Road) be designed to improve safety and connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists both under the Interim condition, and full buildout. Potomac Avenue south of E. Glebe Road is outside of the Plan area and the improvements proposed are currently not funded. Additional recommended improvements would need to be considered through a future budget process. Recent pedestrian improvements funded through the City's Complete Streets program have been made in this area including a new crosswalk across Potomac Avenue at Bluemont Avenue.</p>
4/25/2017	<p>“Dale C”: Totally agree with T. Geibel here. As an avid cyclist and a resident of the Potomac Yard area, I ride and drive on Potomac Ave quite a bit. There really is</p>	<p>The North Potomac Yard SAP Update Transportation Study determined that under existing conditions, the</p>

	<p>no reason here for two lanes north and south since the traffic is so low. The trail along the east side of the road is great, but currently having it abruptly end at E. Glebe is dangerous. A full bike lane the entire length from the bridge in the south all the way through to Crystal City is a great idea. I haven't had too many issues with drivers while riding in the area, but the dreaded 'right hook' is a constant worry. So yeah, no reason to build out the entire upgraded development, then change the roads after the fact. Put in bike lanes and reduce the amount of traffic lanes now so people get used to it before all the new metro, shops, and businesses go in. Really looking forward to the development of this area, but lets keep the timeline and construction to whatever minimum possible.</p>	<p>peak hour volumes warrant two lanes in the peak direction on Potomac Avenue. In addition, with the plan update, the projected volumes under both the 2020 interim (Phase 1) condition, and full 2040 buildout will require two lanes on Potomac Avenue in the peak direction. The plan recommends that the specific design for Potomac Avenue within the plan area under the 2040 buildout consider pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity.</p>
4/12/2017	<p>"T. Geibel": Thank you to the design and development team for their good efforts. My one big concern is the lack of vision for Potomac Avenue. Presently, the city is planning to turn Potomac Ave. into a part time parking lot, under the guise of making this street more pedestrian friendly. According to the city's description of Potomac Ave, only when the entire build out is complete, which can be many years away, will the city take a look at redesigning Potomac Ave. and establishing as priority; pedestrians, then cyclist and finally automobiles. This is a great vision, however the city should be implementing this vision now, not 10 to 15 years from now when the build out is complete. Enacting this vision now will firmly establish the city's proclamation of being pedestrian and biking friendly. Presently traffic is light on Potomac avenue, now would be perfect opportunity to implement the city's vision with the least amount of disruption. I suggest re-striping Potomac Ave., creating a dedicated center turn lane, reducing the travel lanes to one in each direction and adding bike lanes/ multi-use lanes to the now available extra space on the outside of the road. This is known as a road diet conversion, something the city is very well familiar with and has instituted in other parts of the city. As a reminder, Potomac Ave. transitions back into a single lane once it reaches Crystal Drive in Arlington.</p>	<p>The North Potomac Yard SAP Update Transportation Study determined that under existing conditions, the peak hour volumes warrant two lanes in the peak direction on Potomac Avenue. In addition, with the Plan update, the projected volumes under both the 2020 interim (Phase 1) condition, and full 2040 buildout will require two lanes on Potomac Avenue in the peak direction. The Plan recommends that under the 2021 interim condition, Potomac Avenue within the SAP area include one travel lane and a parking lane in the non-peak direction to improve pedestrian safety and crossing distance. For the 2040 build out scenario, the specific design for Potomac Avenue within the Plan area will consider pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity. Potomac Avenue south of E. Glebe Road is outside of the Plan area and currently not funded. Additional recommended improvements would need to be considered through a future budget process.</p>

	<p>Keeping Potomac avenue as a four lane highway does not benefit the community or it's vision. It only benefits the commuters which use Potomac Avenue as a cut through to bypass Route 1. Maintain Potomac Avenue as planned, will look like Tysons Corner, which is nothing more than buildings surrounded by highways. Now is the time to rethink the design of Potomac Avenue.</p>	
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May 30, 2017

Mr. Karl Moritz
Director, Department of Planning and Zoning
City of Alexandria
301 King Street Alexandria, VA 22314

SUBJECT: **ADVISORY GROUP ENDORSEMENT OF THE NORTH POTOMAC YARD SMALL AREA PLAN UPDATE**

Mr. Moritz:

Having completed our consultations with citizens, the property developer, and city staff, the Advisory Group is pleased to recommend this Master Plan Amendment for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council.

In addition to supporting the Plan as drafted, we have the following observations:

VISION

We've worked to respect the character and maintain the strengths of the 2010 Plan. This refinement strives to take advantage of the substantial scale and strategic location of Phase One, accommodate the physical constraints of the existing retail center, and integrate the design of the Metrorail Station.

We look forward to the realistic possibility that on opening day for our new Station, riders will arrive at a dynamic Metro Plaza bounded by an office building, hotel, and Potomac Yard Park, and opening into an inviting new neighborhood of residences above a vibrant shopping street.

URBAN DESIGN + LAND USE

In terms of creating a real place that is urban in character, thoroughly transit oriented, and defined by a broad mix of uses at significant density, we believe this is a fundamentally sound evolution of the Plan.

The framework of blocks and streets continues to provide connectivity throughout and beyond the Yard, while optimizing multimodal access to the Metrorail Station.

Individuality of form and space were a hallmark of the 2010 framework plan, which promised intriguing public places. As these streets and squares and buildings are designed, we encourage the strategic incorporation of idiosyncratic spatial forms, as a counterpoint to the regularity of the orthogonal grid.

Vistas from streets oriented east / west provide views beyond the Yard toward the river, save for those which are now purposefully directed toward the north Metrorail entrance and the retail building at the terminus of East Reed Avenue.

The Plan identifies quality of architecture and public space as indispensable, and focuses on design and materials. The designation of signature facades in relation to public spaces and long lines of sight, as well as the developer's intention to use several architects to execute Phase One, will also contribute to this imperative.

In pursuit of civic purposes from childcare and youth centers, to reading rooms, exhibition galleries and performance venues, we support the plan's emphasis on collocation, flexibility and incentives. The required comprehensive Community Facilities proposal can guide the innovative public / private coordination necessary to incorporate these uses extensively throughout the Yard.

A concentration of jobs, services and transit options offers a superb opportunity to achieve public, affordable and workforce housing here. We support the proposed tools, especially creative collocation with civic uses, and vigorous pursuit of public / private / nonprofit project collaborations.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The completion of Potomac Yard Park, the creation of Crescent Park, and their intersection with Four Mile Run will comprise an expansive natural and recreational realm along the entire east and north perimeter. Convenient to the entire Yard, they will be a resource for everyone in the city.

Public spaces within Potomac Yard which can contribute to it becoming a memorable place include Metro Square and Market Green.

Metro Square has the potential to become a civic place of generous scale and distinctive public character. We recommend that it have a unique shape and features, with strong lines of sight to and from Metro Plaza and the Station.

Market Green is embedded in the taller architecture and denser population along East Reed Avenue, and is intended to be a place in which a critical mass of retail activity and street life animate and reinforce one another. If it develops as a sequence of spaces on multiple blocks, we recommend that all elements be visually connected and physically contiguous, with one another and with Market Lawn.

WALKABILITY + POTOMAC AVENUE

A compelling sense of place can be achieved here if it is truly walkable. The plan confirms the primacy of pedestrians and cyclists, while simultaneously fulfilling requirements for vehicular movement and parking. Quality of the streetscape design and construction will be critical to achieving a safe, interesting, continuous and comfortable walking environment.

Potomac Avenue is retained in its current alignment due to phasing and cost considerations. We are concerned however that it not become a broad river of traffic which interrupts connectivity east and west across the Yard, to and from the Station and Potomac Yard Park. The Avenue's automobiles, local and rapid transit buses, bicycles and parking should be accommodated at very limited speed, within the minimum practicable number of travel lanes and narrowest possible curb-to-curb width.

SUSTAINABILITY

As development begins, we look forward to the required Environmental Sustainability Master Plan as a comprehensive implementation tool to pursue carbon neutrality, net zero architecture, and district energy solutions across the entire seventy acres, and to achieve the performance goals of the plan.

Addressing our environmental challenges as ambitiously as possible, while respecting the limits of financial and technical feasibility, is a formidable ongoing task. The Advisory Group process proved to be a difficult venue in which to consider the appropriate balance among these complex issues. We recognize and support the Environmental Action Plan, soon to be refined and synchronized with the Green Building Policy, as the primary tool to guide Small Area Plans in pursuit of citywide sustainability goals.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The proposed pumping station in Potomac Yard Park at Four Mile Run is a major opportunity to enrich the range of experience in the park while providing a necessary facility. The Alexandria ReNew Headquarters sets an excellent standard for creative and pragmatic integration of public open space, quality architecture, and cutting edge infrastructure.

The existing storm water pond in Potomac Yard Park near East Glebe Road, while just beyond the Plan boundary, is a concern. Enclosed by chain link and situated directly between the North and South Metrorail entrances, it is devoid of plantings, shade, public art or pedestrian amenity. We recommend that these missing characteristics be acquired in the course of completing the Park.

NEIGHBORHOODS

We consider it imperative to respect the scale of long established neighborhoods to the west, and strongly support the plan's moderate height limits for new buildings on the east side of Route One.

For most of the last century, the Yard was a massive transportation infrastructure facility extending across an enormous site. This Plan prescribes a transformation in the North over coming decades into new neighborhoods, which in conjunction with completion of the community now established in the South, will generate a new Potomac Yard.

We would like to acknowledge the essential contributions of the citizens who offered perceptive observations throughout, and of the development team who shared both the analysis underpinning their concept and an abundance of design material. The interdepartmental team of staff members facilitated our efforts with excellent information, illuminating analysis, and impeccable professionalism as always.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in this endeavor to envision the future of our city.

Regards,



Stephen Koenig *PLANNING COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE, CHAIR*

On behalf of the *NORTH POTOMAC YARD SMALL AREA PLAN ADVISORY GROUP*

Nancy Appleby *AT-LARGE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE*
Jennifer Atkins *PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE*
Mike Caison *AT-LARGE COMMUNITY RESIDENT*
Michael Chapman *LYNHAVEN CIVIC ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE*
Garrett Erdle *AT-LARGE COMMUNITY RESIDENT*
Jon Frederick *ALEXANDRIA HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE*
Jeremy Fretts *POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE*
Patricia Harris *AT-LARGE POTOMAC YARD RESIDENT*
Bill Hendrickson *DEL RAY CITIZENS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE*
Ryan Jones *TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE*
Colleen Stover *AT-LARGE COMMUNITY RESIDENT*

cc:

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION
HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
NORTH POTOMAC YARD SMALL AREA PLAN ADVISORY GROUP
Mark Jinks *CITY MANAGER*
Emily Baker *DEPUTY CITY MANAGER*
Jeffrey Farner *DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING*

May 8, 2017

Re: AHAAC support of North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update

The Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC) wishes to express its support for the North Potomac Yard (NPY) Small Area Plan Update to be considered by Planning Commission and City Council at their June public hearings. AHAAC has followed this planning initiative closely over the past year, with regular updates from our Committee member, Jon Frederick, who serves on the NPY SAP Update Advisory Group, and from Housing staff. On May 4, 2017, the Committee voted unanimously to endorse the Plan.

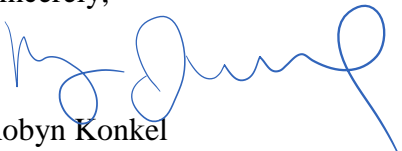
Through the NPY Small Area Plan Update, the City will achieve a number of community benefits, including enhanced open and green space, a vibrant retail destination, and expanded opportunities for a potential range of affordable housing. We note the Plan's consistency with the policies and goals of the Housing Master Plan to diversify housing options in the city, in particular through the use of tools such as the Bonus Density and Height Program (Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance). We applaud the Plan's recommendation to permit projects to pursue bonus density up to 30% in exchange for affordable housing units generated at no financial cost to the city.

We are also glad to see important past housing recommendations preserved in the Plan, such as allowing ARHA replacement units and encouraging public, non-profit, and private partnerships to maximize the use of private and public land and to leverage available resources for the development of affordable housing, including public housing. In this spirit, we hope that the developer will work creatively with the City to implement the housing recommendations to achieve a significant number of committed affordable units.

We look forward to reviewing specific affordable housing plans for NPY at the time of DSUP review and to working with the City and ACPS to explore opportunities to co-locate affordable housing with a future school and/or other public use on Block 4.

Please contact me if you have any questions about AHAAC's action regarding the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update.

Sincerely,



Robyn Konkel
Chair



May 11, 2017

Honorable Mayor Allison Silberberg and Members of City Council
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: EPC Comments on the Old Town North and North Potomac Yard Small Area Plans

Dear Mayor Silberberg and Members of Council:

On behalf of the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC), I'm writing to share our comments on the proposed Small Area Plans for both Old Town North and North Potomac Yard. Given that these plans are being considered at the same time, I'm providing both sets of comments for efficiency and consistency.

First, let me applaud City staff for the significant work they have done engaging the community in drafting these two plans. The EPC recognizes how much time staff puts into community outreach and how seriously they take public input. Second, I'd like to acknowledge our support and appreciation for both plans' commitment to sustainability, which is very much in the spirit of our Eco-City Charter.

We also believe it is important to highlight the unique environmental context within which Council will consider these plans. While the Trump Administration has questioned the very existence of anthropogenic climate change, we in Alexandria understand and accept the scientific consensus. Much of the carbon emitted to date and in our lifetime will remain in the atmosphere for tens to hundreds of thousands of years.¹ Thus, the next few decades offer a brief window of opportunity to minimize potentially catastrophic climate change. We have a responsibility to ensure that City policy, as reflected in these two small area plans, publicly reaffirms our commitment to addressing this global challenge in our community.

I have focused this letter on the few places where we believe the plans require additional specificity and clarification to align more closely with the City's sustainability and climate goals, to take account of new technological trends and policy developments, and to provide greater consistency.

To that end, we offer the following recommendations:

¹ Clark, P. U., Shakun, J. D., Marcott, S. A., Mix, A. C., Eby, M., Kulp, S., ... & Schrag, D. P. (2016). Consequences of twenty-first-century policy for multi-millennial climate and sea-level change. *Nature Climate Change*.

1. Green Building:

Old Town North & North Potomac Yard: Both draft plans currently recommend, “Explore a minimum of LEED Silver or comparable, or the City’s Green Building standards and requirements, whichever is greater. In addition, new buildings will comply with the EAP, as implemented through City policies. Energy consumption/utilization and stormwater should be prioritized in the certification for the buildings.”

Commentary: Since the current EAP sets a target that by 2020 all new buildings will achieve LEED Gold standards, and by 2025 all new buildings will achieve LEED Platinum, both plans should set a more ambitious goal than LEED Silver. While the EPC expects that the City’s Green Building policy will be updated no later than the end of FY2019, including a more ambitious goal in these SAPs will signal to the development community the direction that the City intends to take the revised policy.² Further, City Council and staff agreed in June of 2015 that the Old Town North SAP specifically would be used to demonstrate new green building policies, but the current draft does not reflect that prior agreement. As we have recommended in the past and staff has committed to pursuing, we believe that the City should require developers to meet a minimum set of points towards their LEED certifications since emission reduction and stormwater reduction remain City priorities.³ We also believe that both plans present the City with opportunities to pilot new approaches to Green Building, including Passive House and Net Zero buildings that are not currently contemplated in either plan, but will be required if the City is to achieve its stated carbon reduction goals.

There are new opportunities available to the City to make both plan areas attractive to developers who are interested in pursuing green building and potential tenants who are interesting in occupying such buildings. Governor McAuliffe recently signed into law a bill, HB 1565, which authorizes the City to establish green development zones that would provide developers, tenants, and green businesses incentives to build and/or occupy green buildings.

Recommendations:

1a. Recognizing that the City’s Green Building Policy will be updated no later than FY2019, but that some development proposals may be submitted by developers before it is finalized, set a minimum of LEED Gold or comparable for all developments, or the City’s green building standards and requirements, whichever is greater.

1b. Specify that a minimum number of points from the “Energy and Atmosphere” and “Water Efficiency” categories will be required for buildings to meet the City’s Green Building certification requirements.

1c. Offer additional floor area to developers or other incentives, such as those authorized by HB 1565, that pilot Passive House certified buildings or Net Zero Energy Buildings as certified by the Living Future Institute.

² See Memo from Karl Moritz to the Planning Commission on the Long Range Interdepartmental Work Program dated May 2, 2017. http://legistar.granicus.com/alexandria/meetings/2017/5/1706_A_Planning_Commission_17-05-02_Docket.pdf

³ See Descriptions of the FY 2016 Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Program Projects: <https://alexandria.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2358003&GUID=4624A978-B410-49F7-873D-E8AA83635A7E>

2. Carbon Reduction & Alternative Energy

Old Town North: The current draft recommends that the power plant site “*should strive to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040.*”

The draft recommends that the plan, “*Encourage the use of alternative energy sources including but not limited to solar and wind power throughout the Plan area.*”

The draft has an objective for the power plant site of, “*Emphasizing renewable district energy including, solar, ground source heat pumps, Microgrids, and battery storage.*”

North Potomac Yard: The current draft recommends that “*North Potomac Yard should strive to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040.*”

The draft recommends that the plan, “*Encourage the use of alternative energy sources including but not limited to solar and wind power throughout the Plan area.*”

Commentary: Both plans should reiterate the City’s stated commitment in the Environmental Action Plan and the City’s Energy and Climate Plan, both of which set a goal for all new buildings to be carbon neutral by 2030, not 2040. The language in the OTN SAP only applies to the power plant site, but should apply to all new buildings in the district. Further, the current language in the draft SAPs is unclear and could be construed to suggest that both areas should be completely carbon neutral by 2040. While a goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2040 for an entire area of the City is commendable, it would require radical technological changes outside of the City’s control or influence. Excluding emissions from transportation, for example, we could achieve such a goal if Dominion’s electricity were to become 100% carbon neutral and then also fully displaced local natural gas service. While we should strive to reduce emissions across the City, the goal of carbon neutrality should be focused initially on new buildings over which the City has more direct influence.

Both plans encourage alternative energy, but do so inconsistently and omit key local resources. There are local renewable sources that the City should work with developers to pursue, including geothermal energy, sewer heat, and waste heat from buildings. These can each be used as components in a district energy system or in some cases, like geothermal, can be used in a single building (e.g. Minnie Howard has a geothermal system). While the OTN SAP contemplates district energy in the power plant site, the NPY SAP is silent on district energy, which is likely the deepest source of potential emission reduction in the area. Developers should also be encouraged to explore solar PV and battery storage for onsite electricity production and consumption. While referenced, wind power is not meaningfully available on a local level.

Recommendations:

2a: Set a goal in both SAPs that all new buildings built in or after 2030 will be carbon neutral. Do not limit the goal in Old Town North only to the power plant site.

2b: Explore the development of district energy systems for heating and cooling that take advantage of local renewable energy sources, including but not limited to geothermal energy, sewage heat, anaerobic digestion, and waste heat from buildings.

2c: Encourage onsite generation and storage of renewable electricity from solar PV and other available renewable resources.

3. Transportation: Autonomous Vehicles, Electric Vehicles, and Vision Zero

Commentary: There is no mention in either SAP of Autonomous Vehicles (AVs) and the future role they may play, and only a short reference to electric vehicle (EV) charging. If the City is going to truly focus on reducing emissions, it will have to get serious about reducing transportation related emissions. The Metro station and additional bus capacity will be very helpful in that regard. But we should also take account of the emergence of AV and EV technologies, including how to support the future electrification of our DASH bus fleet. Further, the SAPs are silent on the City's Vision Zero goals, which should be reaffirmed.

Recommendations:

3a. Provide clear plans for incorporating both AV and EV technologies, including charging infrastructure, into development plans, and assess their potential for reducing emissions as well as parking requirements within the area.

3b. References be added to the City's Vision Zero goals in both SAPs.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations, and for your continued leadership and steadfast commitment to building a sustainable Alexandria.

Sincerely,



Jim Kapsis
Chair
Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission



**DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS
AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

1108 Jefferson Street

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

James B. Spengler
Director

Phone 703.746.4343

Fax 703.838.6344

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

May 25, 2017

TO: City of Alexandria Planning Commission

Re: North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan

Dear Commissioners:

I write on behalf of the Park and Recreation Commission in support of the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan.

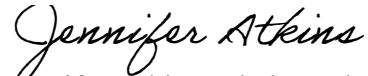
The Commission is pleased that this updated plan provides for nine acres of open space and appreciates the work of the staff, the developer, and the advisory commission in paying attention to the value that open space provides in creating great quality of life for all. The Commission wishes to highlight the following points as you consider the plan:

- **Connectivity is Key.** The North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan provides both internal connectivity of open space within the development and external connectivity of open space with the existing Alexandria open space network and the existing Arlington County open space network. Connected networks of open space are key to creating and maintaining walkable, sustainable communities. Apparently, there were some comments from the dais at a City Council hearing indicating a desire for less connectivity. The Park and Recreation Commission emphatically opposes such a change and has heard no public comment in support of such a change. We must continue to strive for a true citywide network of connected open spaces.
- **Active Open Space Is Good.** The Commission reiterates that activating open spaces where people can come together is critical to a thriving and strong community. As development comes to fruition under this plan, we will continue to encourage uses such as ping pong tables, chess/checkers tables, bocce courts and other similar things that draw people to open spaces. Such uses compliment surrounding retail uses by activating the entire area.
- **Open Space Should Remain Open Space.** The Commission understands that comments from the dais at City Council suggested removing open space from the plan in order to add more affordable housing. The Commission adamantly opposes such a course of action. Dense urban environments such as North Potomac Yard require significant open space to serve the needs of residents (and workers). Adding more residents would arguably require more, not less, open

space. There are other ways to encourage the addition of affordable housing that are outlined in the plan.

- **The Pump Station Should Be A Useful Feature.** The Commission strongly urges that the pump station included in the plan be constructed in a way that it becomes a usable park feature. Too often the city and developers lack creativity in creating these needed structures and the result is a waste of potentially usable (or at least more attractive) space. We encourage forward and creative thinking – like that shown with the athletic field above the Alexandria Renew plant or that shown in illustrative drawings presented by staff. We think the same applies to BMP “ponds” like the one just to the south of the North Potomac Yard area which are often simply large holes full of water when they could be designed better to add to park features.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Atkins".

Jennifer Atkins, Chair, on behalf of
the Park and Recreation Commission



Alexandria Transportation Commission
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone: 703.746.4025

www.alexandriava.gov

May 9, 2017

The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Transportation Elements of North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update

Dear Mayor Silberberg and Members of City Council:

At its April 19, 2017 meeting, the Alexandria Transportation Commission reviewed the draft North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan, including the Plan's transportation recommendations. The Commission moved to affirm that the transportation recommendations in the draft North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan are consistent with the goals outlined in the City's Transportation Master Plan, adopted in 2008, as shown in the attachment.

As such, the Transportation Commission recommends paying continued attention to the implementation of the transportation recommendations, especially the pedestrian and bicycle improvements, so that they meet the goals of both the plan and the Complete Streets Policy Hierarchy that ranks, in order of priority, pedestrian traffic and access, bicycle traffic and access, transit traffic and access, and personal vehicle traffic and access.

The Transportation Commission was created by Council to advocate and promote the development of balanced transportation systems in the City through oversight of the Transportation Master Plan. Our action on April 19th was conducted to fulfill that oversight obligation.

The Commission appreciates your consideration of its input on this project.

Sincerely,

Jerry King
Chair, Alexandria Transportation Commission

Attachment: North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan – Comparison to Transportation Master Plan

cc: Alexandria Transportation Commission
Mark Jinks, City Manager
Yon Lambert, Director, T&ES
Carrie Sanders, Deputy Director, Transportation/Transit, T&ES
Christopher Ziemann, Division Chief, Transportation Planning, T&ES

TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN GOALS:	WITH THE 2010 ADOPTED PLAN	WITH THE PLAN UPDATE
Transit		
<p>Ensure that people can travel into, within and out of the City of Alexandria by providing a mass transit system that combines different modes of travel into a seamless, comprehensive and coordinated effort.</p>	<p>With the 2010 Plan, the Route 1 Metroway would use the alignment currently planned, using E. Glebe Road and a realigned Potomac Avenue. This alignment requires that stations be at the far east side of the development, and creates a longer walking distance to Route 1 and areas west. The future Potomac Yard Metro station would be located on the east side of Potomac Avenue, requiring pedestrians and bicyclists to cross a major, wide arterial before accessing the development area. Connectivity between local transit service, Route 1 Metroway and the Potomac Yard Metrorail station would be accommodated through an intermodal facility.</p>	<p>The Plan Update keeps Potomac Avenue along its current alignment. The Metroway is anticipated to use Wesmond Drive instead of Evans, allowing for the Metroway stop to be closer to the future Potomac Yard Metrorail station entrance. Using the current alignment of Potomac Avenue also allows for Metroway stops to be more centrally located within the development, and closer to Route 1 and areas west. Keeping the current Potomac Avenue alignment also allows pedestrians and bicyclists to access greater areas of the development without having to immediately cross Potomac Avenue. Connectivity between local transit service, Route 1 Metroway and the Potomac Yard Metrorail station would be accommodated within the urban fabric of adjacent redevelopment.</p>
Pedestrian		
<p>Engineering: The City will provide a continuous, connected and accessible network that enables pedestrians - particularly children and those with mobility impairments - to move safely and comfortably between places and destinations.</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan provides for a good pedestrian network and street grid that facilitates good pedestrian connectivity, including connections to South Potomac Yard, and areas west of Route 1. A drawback of the 2010 Plan is that it requires pedestrians to cross a wide, busy Potomac Avenue to access the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station.</p>	<p>The Plan Update recommends an improved street grid that will facilitate better pedestrian connectivity, similar to the 2010 Plan. However, the Plan Update improves pedestrian connectivity from the Potomac Yard Metrorail station to the plan area, by dispersing pedestrians to activity centers prior to Potomac Avenue, and also includes specific parameters for the design of Potomac Avenue to minimize the width of pedestrian crossings, and includes regular signalized intersections along Potomac Avenue to better facilitate pedestrian crossings. The Plan Update also recommends separating pedestrians and bicycles on the trail network within the park in Landbay K. The Plan update also includes the requirement to follow the City's Complete Street design guidelines that include ways to improve pedestrian design and safety.</p>

<p>Encouragement: The City will encourage mobility for all pedestrians, regardless of age or ability, by promoting walking as a means of improving health and increasing transit usage.</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan includes an improved street grid and associated pedestrian facilities will help to encourage walking between uses and to transit. The Plan also requires an extension of Four Mile Run trail to improve access to the Mt. Vernon Trail. The new facilities will be constructed to be ADA accessible, attractive, and convenient, and therefore encourage users of all ages and abilities to access uses. A drawback is that the plan requires pedestrians to cross a wide, busy Potomac Avenue to access the Metrorail station and park, which could discourage use of these facilities.</p>	<p>The Plan Update also maintains the improved street grid and trail system and associated pedestrian facilities will help to encourage walking between uses and to transit. The new facilities will be constructed to be ADA accessible, attractive, and convenient, and therefore encourage users of all ages and abilities to access uses. In addition, the proposed design for Potomac Avenue, allows for easier access to the Metrorail station, and recommendations for safer pedestrian design will further encourage and promote transit use as well as encourage healthy activities.</p>
<p>Education: The City will develop a Safe Routes to School Program and awareness initiatives that address pedestrian safety, rights and responsibilities.</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan includes improved pedestrian facilities that are ADA accessible, separated from autos and have an improved streetscape. In addition, the Plan includes improved connections to the future potential school within the plan area. These recommended improvements are compatible with a Safe Routes to School program.</p>	<p>The Plan Update includes improved pedestrian facilities that are ADA accessible, separated from autos and have an improved streetscape. In addition, the Plan includes improved connections to the future potential school within the plan area. These recommended improvements are compatible with a Safe Routes to School program.</p>
<p>Safety: The City will create a safe pedestrian environment through effective law enforcement and implementation of pedestrian safety countermeasures.</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan recommends a compact layout with a mixture of land uses and improved road grids that will result in direct, visible pedestrian zones with additional crosswalks. It recommends widened sidewalks and trails that are ADA accessible, and buffered from vehicles. The 2010 Plan also requires funding for traffic calming in neighborhoods west of Route 1, that will improve safety for pedestrians. One drawback of the 2010 Plan is that it realigns Potomac Avenue along the eastern edge, where the east-west streets terminate onto a wide street. This requires pedestrians to cross a wide street to access the metrorail station, and park within Landbay K. These improvements will encourage pedestrian activity, improve pedestrian visibility, and help to reduce auto speeds, thereby improving overall pedestrian safety.</p>	<p>The Plan Update is consistent in developing a compact layout with a mixture of land uses, improved road grid, wide, accessible sidewalks and trails. The Plan Update also requires the funding for traffic calming improvements west of Route 1. In addition, the Plan Update improves pedestrian connectivity from the Potomac Yard Metrorail station to the plan area, by dispersing pedestrians to activity centers prior to Potomac Avenue, and also includes specific parameters for the design of Potomac Avenue to minimize pedestrian crossing width, and regular signalized intersections along Potomac Avenue to better facilitate pedestrian crossings. The Plan Update also recommends separating pedestrians and bicycles on the trail network within the park in Landbay K. also requires funding for traffic calming in neighborhoods west of Route 1, that will improve safety for pedestrians. Finally, the Plan update recommends a shared street separating the park from the development, designed to slow down vehicles and act as a front door to the park. These improvements will encourage pedestrian activity, improve pedestrian visibility, and help to reduce auto speeds, thereby improving overall pedestrian safety.</p>

Bicycle		
<p>Engineering: The City will complete a connected system of primary and secondary bikeways with ample bicycle parking to serve bicyclists needs.</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan recommends a comprehensive network of bicycle facilities, including an extended Potomac Avenue trail linking Braddock Road Metro area to North Potomac Yard, an extended Four Mile Run Trail to connect to the Mt. Vernon Trail, and improved on- and off-street bicycle facilities to provide good east-west and north-south bicycle connectivity.</p>	<p>The Plan Update also includes the extended Potomac Avenue trail, extended Four Mile Run Trail, and improved east-west and north-south bicycle connectivity. The Plan Update has identified the east-west streets of Tide Lock Street, Silver Meteor, and Wesmond Street to have bicycle facilities. It recommends north-south bicycle facilities on Route 1 and along Potomac Avenue. The Plan Update requires new streets to follow the Complete Street design guidelines, includes the addition of shared streets, such as along the linear park, and reinforces the separation of pedestrian and bicycles on trails. The Plan also recommends bicycle parking at major activity centers, including Bike Share stations located at major activity centers within each neighborhood in the Plan area.</p>
<p>Encouragement: The City will seek to increase bicycle usage and bicycle-transit connections through targeted outreach and encouragement.</p>	<p>The City's Transportation Master Plan includes objectives such as integration of bicycles with transit, and providing bicycle accommodations through development review, as well as targeted outreach. The 2010 plan includes improved connectivity between bikes and other uses, including transit, bike parking, and the requirement for a Transportation Management Plan that would include strategies to encourage and increase bicycle usage.</p>	<p>The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 plan, but includes additional recommendations that encourage bicycle usage. The Plan Update requires new streets to follow the Complete Street design guidelines, includes the addition of shared streets, such as along the park, reinforces the separation of pedestrian and bicycles on trails, and also includes the requirement of bikeshare stations that will encourage bicycle use.</p>
<p>Education: The City will develop and implement targeted Safe Routes to School programs as well as additional programs for adult cyclists, and motorists.</p>	<p>The City's Transportation Master Plan includes objectives such as education, bicycle registration and outreach. The 2010 Plan recommends improved bicycle facilities throughout the Plan area, that are compatible with a Safe Routes to School program. Other recommended programs in the City's Transportation Master Plan, such as education, providing bicycle maps, and outreach would continue to be implemented.</p>	<p>The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 plan. In addition, the improved bicycle connectivity, complete street design guideline requirements, and bikeshare stations will be beneficial toward a Safe Routes to School program.</p>

<p>Safety: The City will create a safe bicycle environment and reduce user conflict on shared-use paths through effective law enforcement, detailed crash analysis and implementation of bicycle safety countermeasures.</p>	<p>The objectives identified in the City's Transportation Master Plan to meet this goal would continue to be implemented. The 2010 Plan improves on the street grid, and provides dedicated bicycle facilities throughout the plan area to improve bicycle safety, resulting in greater awareness of bicycles by motorists, and overall improved safety for bicyclists.</p>	<p>The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 Plan, but improves safety by requiring use of the Complete Street design guidelines, separating pedestrians from bicycles on the trail within Landbay K, and recommending a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly design of Potomac Avenue, with a grid that crosses the street through signalized intersections.</p>
<p><i>Streets and Neighborhood Protection (Traffic Calming)</i></p>		
<p>Provide protection to residential neighborhoods from traffic operating at excessive speeds and excessive volumes of traffic.</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan recommends a street grid that will include traffic control at intersections. The grid and streets will be designed in a manner to reduce vehicular speeds, especially on residential streets, and will be consistent with the Complete Streets design guidelines. Features include narrowed lanes, wide sidewalks and non-motorized paths, pedestrian crosswalks, bulbouts, on-street parking, and varying pavement materials. These features will provide greater emphasis toward pedestrians, thereby reducing conflicts with autos and improving overall pedestrian safety. The Plan also includes funding toward traffic calming improvements for neighborhoods west of Route 1.</p>	<p>The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 Plan. However, it also builds on the 2010 plan through the addition of the shared street along the park, which will be designed to slow vehicles. The plan also keeps Potomac Avenue on its current alignment, but requires it to be designed in a manner to better control traffic and improve pedestrian safety.</p>
<p>Keep neighborhood street use, to the greatest extent possible, within the classification defined in the transportation chapter of the Master Plan.</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan recommends an improved street grid that results in an addition of local streets where traffic would travel at a slower speed. Arterials such as Route 1 and Potomac Avenue are redesigned in a manner to improve connectivity and safety for all modes, including improved pedestrian crossings, and improved transit connectivity.</p>	<p>The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 Plan. However, it also builds on the 2010 plan through the addition of the shared street along the park that will be designed to slow vehicles. The plan also keeps Potomac Avenue on its current alignment, but requires it to be designed in a manner to better control traffic and improve pedestrian safety, which is an improvement over the 2010 plan.</p>
<p>Increase access, safety, comfort and convenience for pedestrians and bicyclists by changing the culture of neighborhood street use from "cars first" to "people first".</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan recommends a compact layout with a mixture of land uses, and improved street grid, and safe, accessible, attractive and safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities. A key feature of the plan is to provide a more human scaled, memorable place that focuses on people, and neighborhood nodes. These features will encourage more walking and biking between uses, and to transit, improve pedestrian visibility, and help to reduce auto speeds, thereby creating a culture of "people first".</p>	<p>The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 Plan. However, it also builds on the 2010 plan through the requirement to use the City's Complete Street design guidelines that prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists. The plan update also includes the addition of the shared street along the park that will be designed to slow vehicles and give greater priority to pedestrians and bicyclists. The plan also keeps Potomac Avenue on its current alignment, but requires it to be designed in a manner to better control traffic and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, which is an improvement over the 2010 plan.</p>

Base the expenditure of public resources on need.	The 2010 Plan anticipates the redevelopment of most of the area within the Plan area. The expense attributed toward the development of the majority of streets / blocks, pedestrian and bicycle facilities would primarily be born by the developer, and developer contributions were also required for some improvements such as Metroway, the Potomac Yard Metrorail station, traffic calming west of Route 1, intersection improvements on Route 1, and improvements along Four Mile Run.	The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 Plan. However, it also builds on the 2010 plan through the requirement of developer contributions toward bikeshare stations at key activity centers.
Foster a collaborative working relationship between the City staff and neighborhood residents in the development of traffic calming measures.	The Complete Streets program includes funding for traffic calming projects. As part of the program, staff identifies projects based on citizen requests and if the street warrants traffic calming measures. Staff conducts outreach with area residents for input prior to project implementation. The 2010 Plan requires a monetary contribution of approximately \$1 million (in 2010 dollars, and increased annually for inflation) from the developer toward traffic calming improvements on streets west of Route 1.	The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 Plan. City staff would conduct outreach with residents in neighborhoods west of Route 1 for specific traffic calming improvements, prior to the occupancy of development within North Potomac Yard.
Parking		
A comprehensive parking management strategy that is fully integrated with the City's plans for transit, streets, bicycles and pedestrians and functions in coordination with these plans - furthering the City's overall goals and wider transportation vision.	Today, the area is dominated by a commercial shopping center with big box retail, which results in the need to provide extensive surface parking. The 2010 Plan recommended a mixture of uses near high capacity transit, such as the Metroway and the future Potomac Yard Metrorail station. The proposed multi-modal transportation system and higher density mixed land uses will result in a greater share of persons who will walk, bike or ride transit. These characteristics thus allow for lower parking requirements (per the City's recently amended residential parking requirements), and opportunities for shared parking. The Plan recommends that parking spaces be efficiently managed to maximize turnover of spaces, and include smart parking technologies and shared parking. A parking management plan will be required for developments as they occur, which could include measures such as unbundled residential / mixed-use parking. On-street spaces may be metered and be part of a performance parking program.	The Plan Update is consistent with the 2010 Plan. In addition, the Plan Update includes short term drop off parking near the future Metrorail station. Also, the Plan Update recommends on-street parking along Potomac Avenue during Phase 1. On-street parking would be allowed during non-peak periods, and during the peak period on street parking would be provided in the non-peak travel direction. As part of the full buildout, the design of Potomac Avenue would include on-street parking where feasible.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 2, 2017

TO: CHAIRWOMAN MARY LYMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: KARL W. MORITZ, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

SUBJECT: JUNE 6, 2017 DOCKET ADDENDUM: NORTH POTOMAC YARD PLAN - STAFF RESPONSE TO EPC RECOMMENDATIONS

The Environmental Policy Commission's May 11, 2017 letter of support for the North Potomac Yard and Old Town North Plans includes recommended Plan revisions related to Green Building, carbon reduction, and transportation for consideration. The EPC recommendations and staff responses related to the North Potomac Yard Plan follow below.

1. Green Building

EPC Recommendations:

1a). Recognizing that the City's Green Building Policy will be updated no later than FY 2019, but that some development proposals may be submitted by developers before it is finalized, set a minimum of LEED Gold or comparable for all developments, or the City's green building standards and requirements, whichever is greater.

1b). Specify that a minimum number of points from the "Energy and Atmosphere" and "Water Efficiency" categories will be required for buildings to meet the City's Green Building certification requirements.

1c). Offer additional floor area to developers or other incentives, such as those authorized by HB 1565, that pilot Passive House certified buildings or Net Zero Energy Buildings as certified by the Living Future Institute.

Staff Response:

1a). Staff recommends that Small Area Plans not establish new citywide policy, and therefore that the Plan should retain the currently proposed recommendation for "LEED Silver or comparable, or the City's Green Building policy, whichever is greater." When the

EAP and associated Green Building Policy are updated in Fiscal Year 2019, all new development citywide will be expected to comply with the new standards. It should be noted that LEED Silver continues to be an aggressive target recommendation as the energy and building performance requirements within the LEED system are continuously increasing. As an example, a LEED Silver Building under the 2010 standards (LEED v2) would no longer even qualify as LEED certified under the current LEED v4 standards.

1b). Staff recommends that the policy regarding points in LEED categories be addressed in the City's Green Building Policy update, not in the Small Area Plan.

1c). Staff recommends that the City's use of incentives enabled in the new state legislation be addressed in the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) update, not in the Small Area Plan.

2. Carbon Reduction & Alternative Energy

EPC Recommendations:

2a). *Set a goal in both SAPs that all new buildings built in or after 2030 will be carbon neutral. Do not limit the goal in Old Town North only to the power plant site.*

2b). *Explore the development of district energy systems for heating and cooling that take advantage of local renewable energy sources, including but not limited to geothermal energy, sewage heat, anaerobic digestion, and waste heat from buildings.*

2c). *Encourage onsite generation and storage of renewable electricity from solar PV and other available renewable resources.*

Staff Response:

2a). The North Potomac Yard Advisory Group had extensive discussion about sustainability and specifically, carbon neutrality, seeking to develop a recommendation that was both aggressive and achievable. They discussed whether the goal should be applied to individual buildings or the district as a whole, and reached consensus on applying the target to the district as a whole because of the potentially greater benefits to be achieved by addressing the issue holistically. In addition, they applied a target date of 2040 for carbon neutrality, taking into account the 20-30-year anticipated build-out of the Plan.

Staff sees merit in the holistic approach agreed upon by the Advisory Group. At the outset of the project, the developer would be required to submit an Environmental Sustainability Master Plan (ESMP) demonstrating, among other things, how the 2040 carbon neutrality target will be met for the entire plan area. As part of each subsequent Development Special Use Permit (DSUP), the developer will be required to update the ESMP, including the path to 2040 carbon neutrality for the plan area. If progress toward the target is achieved incrementally over the course of the Plan build out, and the requirement to update the ESMP is implemented and monitored, this approach could yield greater environmental benefit in the long run. On the other hand, the EPC's recommendation to apply the standard to individual buildings built in or after 2030 (as opposed to the plan area) may be easier to implement and monitor.

However, because of the Advisory Group’s careful consideration and consensus on this topic, staff recommends the Planning Commission retain the existing recommendation for carbon neutrality to be met plan-area wide by 2040. It should be noted that the Plan references compliance with the EAP as implemented through City policy, so when the green building policy is updated, new development in North Potomac Yard will comply with the policy as updated.

2b.) Staff is not opposed to adding this recommendation proposed by the EPC: *“Explore the development of district energy systems for heating and cooling that take advantage of local renewable energy sources, including but not limited to geothermal energy, sewage heat, anaerobic digestion, and waste heat from buildings.”* The intent is consistent with Advisory Group discussions and uses language appropriate to Small Area Plans.

2c). Staff is not opposed to adding this recommendation: *“Encourage onsite generation and storage of renewable electricity from solar PV and other available renewable resources.”* The intent is consistent with Advisory Group discussions and uses language appropriate to Small Area Plans.

3. Transportation: Autonomous Vehicles, Electric Vehicles, and Vision Zero

EPC Recommendations:

3a). *Provide clear plans for incorporating both AV and EV technologies, including charging infrastructure, into development plans, and assess their potential for reducing emissions as well as parking requirements within the area.*

3b). *References be added to the City’s Vision Zero goals in both SAPs.*

Staff Response:

3a). The Plan has been updated to include general recommendations to consider autonomous vehicles and electric vehicles in street design and parking garages and to not preclude emerging technologies as they develop in the future. More detailed requirements on these topics will be established through the Coordinated Development District (CDD) guidelines and through the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) process.

3b). The Plan has been updated to include reference to the City’s Vision Zero goals.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Proposed Changes for Planning Commission Consideration:

1. Add new recommendation: *“Explore the development of district energy systems for heating and cooling that take advantage of local renewable energy sources, including but not limited to geothermal energy, sewage heat, anaerobic digestion, and waste heat from buildings.”*
2. Add new recommendation: *“Encourage onsite generation and storage of renewable electricity from solar PV and other available renewable resources.”*



COMMUNITY PLANNING HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT
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June 6, 2017

Kristen Walentisch
City of Alexandria
Department of Planning and Zoning
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
PlanComm@alexandriava.gov

Dear Ms. Walentisch:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Master Plan Amendment #2017-0003, North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update. We understand that the update would allow for the existing Target and shopping center to remain for longer than originally planned and redevelopment to proceed on the former theater site including the new Metrorail Station (Phase I) and approximately 1.3 million square feet of development on 25 acres.

Arlington is in agreement that careful consideration of the critical issues of changes in street configuration, bike-pedestrian environment/public realm, open space, land use mix, neighborhood impacts, building heights, better integration of the proposed Metro Station into the design, affordable housing and environmental sustainability contribute to an improved small area plan.

Arlington staff have reviewed the transportation components of the amendment and support the planned changes to adjust the alignment of Potomac Avenue south of Four Mile Run, to develop an enhanced network of appropriately-scaled, local streets, and to emphasize pedestrian access to the Potomac Yard Metrorail station.

Arlington anticipates that the proposed amendment will ultimately result in successful and compatible development to the adjacent Potomac Yard project within Arlington County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert J. Duffy", written over a circular stamp or seal.

Robert J. Duffy, AICP
Planning Director

CC: Samia Byrd, Assistant County Manager, CMO
Claude Williamson, Acting Director, CPHD
Jennifer Smith, Acting Comprehensive Planning Supervisor, CPHD
Dennis Leach, Transportation Director, DES
Leon Vignes, CPHD